

HAUNTED UK PODCAST

(Season 4) Episode 34 – Predictions of the Future

In 1983 a movie, based on a novel written by Stephen King, was released starring Christopher Walken, and directed by David Cronenberg. It told the story of an everyday schoolteacher who, after a terrible car accident, fell into a coma. He was moved to a special institute where his mother and father hoped that one day he would recover and wake up. Five years after the accident, he did just that...but he woke up with a very special gift...or a 'curse' as he called it. Whenever he touched someone, he could see their past and future. Something as innocent as the shaking of hands, or even a hug would almost instantly cause him to be immersed into a point of time where he could see what had happened, or what was going to happen to that person and their loved ones. That movie was called *The Dead Zone*, and if you have any interest in the paranormal – especially in the subject which we're going to discuss in this episode, then I urge you to watch it.

This is episode 34 of the Haunted UK Podcast, and in this episode, we're going to explore some of the most fascinating premonitions that everyday people have had...

When I first watched *The Dead Zone*, it absolutely captivated me. The thought that any person could have the power to not only look into somebody's past, but to also see into their future fascinated me. In the movie, Christopher Walken's character has a chance meeting with a politician who is campaigning to be senator, and as they shake hands it becomes apparent that this man not only wins the election, but also goes on to become the President of the United States of America....with disastrous results. So, if you had that fore knowledge... information that only you knew...*would you do anything about it?* The chances of anyone believing you would be remote to say the least, so do you just sit back and let a potential future play out, or do you put your neck on the line and tell people, tell anyone who'll listen about what you've seen?... but what if you're wrong? Premonitions are a phenomenon that can garner huge acclaim and popularity for some but can also become the downfall for others. *How do you handle that information...but more importantly...what do you do with it?*

On the 17th of July 2014, a Boeing 777-200ER commercial airliner took off with 283 passengers aboard and 15 crew. It was a Malaysia Airlines plane, and it was travelling from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur. Just a few months earlier on the 8th of March of the same year, Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 mysteriously disappeared on a routine flight from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing. The airliner's transponders were switched off making the aircraft almost invisible as it continued to fly over the

Indian Ocean – where it is believed that it either ran out of fuel or was purposely crashed into the sea. No bodies have ever been found, and only small amounts of wreckage have turned up in the years that have passed. Until the black box flight recorders are found there will never be a 100% concrete explanation as to what happened on that flight. *Was it a hijacking?... or maybe pilot suicide?...* speculation continues to this day...as unsettling, distressing and mysterious as that flight is, it isn't the flight we are questioning today... it's the tragic flight of MH17....

Cor Schilder was a 33-year-old florist and a budding musician who was travelling from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur with his girlfriend for a much-needed holiday. As the couple were waiting to board their flight, Cor took a photo of the plane and posted it on social media along with the message *'If the plane disappears...this is what it looks like'*. Friends who saw the post and photo commented on it, assuming that this was Cor trying to make a light-hearted joke regarding the relatively recent disappearance of flight MH370...after all, they were about to board Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17.

Witnesses who were at the airport that day said that both Cor and his girlfriend were in good spirits and seemed excited and ready to get to their destination, and at 10.15am they took off and left Amsterdam Airport. MH17 was scheduled to land in Kuala Lumpur at around 10.10pm the following evening, but it would never make its destination. Approximately four hours after take-off, Flight MH17 disappeared from radar and all communications with air traffic control stopped.

The aircraft was approximately 30 miles away from the Russian and Ukrainian border, when it was shot down by a missile which was fired from Russian held Ukrainian territory by Russian backed separatists. There were no survivors and the air crash investigation teams involved in the harrowing duty of finding out what had brought the plane down, reported extremely upsetting and horrifying scenes at the crash site.

Cor Schilder's social media post was soon brought to the attention of the media, and many people saw this as one person predicting the crash of the aircraft which both he and his girlfriend would tragically lose their lives on...*but was this just a complete coincidence?* It's fair to say that the only probable reason Cor took the photo of the aircraft in the first place and made the comment was because of the case of Malaysia Airlines flight MH370. *So, should we take this event into consideration when talking about premonitions?* Well, let's delve into some more strange tales and then you can make a full judgement on the whole phenomena...

It was a usual bustling busy morning for Wall Street executive Barrett Naylor as he made his way to work on the 26th of February 1993....his destination of employment...The World Trade Centre, New York City. As his train approached Grand Central Station, he recalled a feeling that started to completely envelop him...a feeling of extreme and severe foreboding and fear. Something in his head was telling him *to not go to work*, but to turn around and go back home as quickly as possible.

He said that he couldn't explain for the life of him where these feelings had suddenly come from, but for some unknown reason, he decided to listen to them and make his way back home. Whatever it was that had influenced him on that day probably saved his life, because at 12.17pm terrorists detonated a huge bomb which had been concealed inside a yellow Ford Econoline van and left in the car park underneath the North Tower of The World Trade Centre complex. The objective was to bring down both towers by toppling the North Tower into the South Tower. Had their plan worked, the loss of life and devastation would have been horrific...but just seven years later, Al-Qaeda

terrorists struck again...and this time the whole world would be brought to a standstill. On that very day....seven years after the truck bombing incident, Barrett Naylor once again got to Grand Central station early in the morning of September the 11th, 2001. As he stood on the platform...that same dark, foreboding feeling began to creep through his entire body.

He hadn't had this feeling once since the truck bombing of 1993...but here it was again, literally telling him to turn back and go back home. *Should he ignore it?...or take notice of it?*...he took notice and returned home and watched in horror as the events of that fateful day unfolded in front of him on television. As you'd expect, he had huge feelings of guilt as time went by...but he could never ignore the fact that something had been almost warning him of the impending disasters that were about to take place, and whilst he told a few people of his strange feelings at the time, he didn't think that anyone else would have believed him if he'd have told them.

These two premonitions are astonishing – the fact that they happened to the same person and seemingly correctly forewarned him of something that would happen on those two separate days. But these were feelings...not visions; so, it would have been impossible for Barrett Naylor to have informed authorities with even a hint of what was to come...another truck bombing...or worse. Without any information or clues as to what would take place, Barrett didn't stand a chance of convincing anyone that his strange feelings of foreboding and fear would have been a warning of these two horrific terrorist attacks.

So, what happens when someone actually foresees a disaster that is about to happen...*what do they do?* This brings us to the startling and much documented case of David Booth. Now I referenced David's story briefly in the Listener Stories Finale of Season 1 when I read out a story kindly sent in from a listener – their story described the moment that his friend had woken up and told him of a dream that he'd had. This dream involved a large red and white ship tipping onto its side...around two weeks later the Herald of Free Enterprise ferry capsized outside the Belgium Port of Zeebrugge.

Like many, I find David's story truly remarkable...so here it is in full...

David Booth was your everyday guy...married with children...living life the best way he and his family could. As with most people, David had hobbies, interests...would go on vacations and would meet with friends. There was never an interest in the paranormal or the supernatural and he'd never spoken about anything strange that had happened to him, but that was about to change on the night of May the 16th 1979...

David recalls that he had a dream...a very vivid dream. He dreamt that he was looking out over a field when he saw a large passenger jet flying, but it wasn't making any noise. He continued to watch this plane as it then began to turn over and then horrifically crash into the ground. It was only when the explosion and fire would begin to die down that he would wake up. He didn't really put this down to anything at all...just a dream, nothing to be worried about.

The following night an exhausted David Booth went to bed to hopefully get a better night's sleep...but it wasn't to be. He experienced the exact same dream, but this time when he woke up, he noticed straight away that he'd been crying. He also said that there was a huge sense of urgency now sweeping over him...as if he needed to do something in connection with this dream...*but what?* As the days went by, David was hounded every single night by the same visions of this passenger airliner turning over and crashing into the ground.

By the 22nd of May, six days after his first dream, David felt that he just couldn't remain silent any longer...he had to tell someone. He plucked up the courage and called the Cincinnati Office of the Federal Aviation Administration and after a while was put through to Facilities Manager Paul Williams. Williams remembers clearly speaking to David Booth and recalls, *'The first thing David described to me was the type of aircraft he thought it was. First of all, he identified it as an American Airlines plane. I asked him if he knew specifically what type of aircraft it was, but David didn't know one type of aircraft from another.'*

Paul Williams then asked David that if he was having the same dream every night, could he try to zero in on any specifics of the aircraft that may give him a clue as to the type of plane that it was. David agreed, but annoyingly the following evening brought no new details that he could share with Paul...until the night after. David noticed in his dream that the airliner had two engines on the wings and one on the tail. He relayed this information back to Williams and he identified the aircraft as a McDonnell Douglas DC-10.

In the early hours of the 25th of May, David had his final dream of the airliner crash. He recalled that he had a feeling that he would never have this dream again when he awoke...somehow, he just knew that this was the last time. The days before, going over the crash time after time after time with Paul Williams had taken its toll on David, and he was now a nervous wreck.

At 3.02pm on the 25th of May 1979, American Airlines Flight 191 crashed shortly after take-off from Chicago's O'Hare International Airport. The aircraft was a McDonnell Douglas DC-10, and just as in David's dream, the plane turned fully over and crashed into the ground. All 258 passengers and 13 crew died on that day. NTSB Investigators found that the engine on the left wing had detached itself because of poor maintenance. This in turn damaged the wing and caused catastrophic failures in the hydraulic and fuel systems.

As the news reached Paul Williams of the Cincinnati FAA, he simply couldn't believe it. David Booth immediately called Williams in a hysterical state, blaming himself for not being able to get more information which could have saved the passengers and crew. Williams replied that Booth had done all he could, and he absolutely should not feel that he should take responsibility for what had happened.

To this day, Paul Williams is convinced that David Booth was somehow chosen to have the visions of that horrific crash – and with so many details of the actual incident and David's dream coinciding, it's hard not to think that something else is going on here. David knew that it was an American Airlines plane...he described the airliner as having three engines with one on the tail...he told of how the plane would fly normally then bank over sharply and crash into the ground...but with no time and date of the impending disaster, both David Booth and Paul Williams were powerless to stop Flight 191 from crashing.

And in another spooky coincidence...David wasn't the only person who knew something was going to happen. Actress Lindsay Wagner was at O'Hare International Airport with her mother... and they were supposed to board that very flight. Now if you don't know who Lindsay Wagner is, she was most famous for her starring role in the American TV series - *The Bionic Woman*, but also appeared in the *Six Million Dollar Man*, *The Fall Guy*, *Grey's Anatomy* and *NCIS*, as well as a host of other TV series and feature films.

Lindsay and her mother were 10 minutes away from boarding Flight 191 when Lindsay says that suddenly she had what could be described as a *'psychic flash'* warning her of impending disaster...she knew she had to somehow stop them both from getting on that plane. She recalls

begging her mother to change to a later flight, giving any excuse she could think of to get her to change her mind. Her mother agreed but was completely confused by her daughter's sudden strange outburst of panic...until a brief time later when they learned that Flight 191 crashed shortly after take-off with no survivors.

Lindsay Wagner has stated that: to this day she has never ignored any premonition she has experienced since. *So, what was going on here with not only David Booth, but also Lindsay Wagner? How were they getting this information? Was this a case of a future parallel dimension somehow being able to connect with both but in different ways?...Or was it some type of unknown spiritual communication?* Whilst David's dreams are astounding, Lindsay's sudden psychic warning is something on another level. Her warning, just like Barrett Naylor's warnings, saved their lives.

Major disasters, from earthquakes to plane crashes, always seem to attract psychics and seers who will go on record saying they successfully predicted that said moment in history, but there's one tragedy that not only has a wealth of premonitions, but also some extremely creepy coincidences.

On the 15 of April 1912 the RMS Titanic struck an iceberg in the North Atlantic on its maiden voyage from Southampton, England to New York City, America. It sank in just under three hours and around 1500 people lost their lives while approximately 710 souls survived. The magnitude of this disaster at the time was enormous, and as the investigations took place, and the survivors gave evidence and interviews...strange stories began to emerge...

Passenger Renée Harris boarded Titanic in Southampton and was on deck as the huge crowds bid the massive ship farewell on her maiden voyage, but disaster struck almost immediately as she left port. Titanic's engines produced a huge amount of power, and as she sailed past the steam liner New York, the massive swell of water began to pull on the mooring ropes holding the New York to another steam liner, the Oceanic. The strain on the ropes became too much, and one by one they began to snap, leaving the New York untethered, and now drifting towards the Titanic. Had it not been for the quick and skilful thinking of both the captain of the tugboat The Vulcan and Captain Smith aboard the Titanic, a large collision would have been certain. As Renée Harris watched this incident unfold, she noticed a handsome stranger now standing beside her. This man asked her '*Do you love life?*', to which she answered '*Of course, why?*'. The gentleman then recounted what had just happened and solemnly warned her it was a very bad omen and, if she valued her life, she would leave the ship at Cherbourg – because that was exactly what he was going to do.

The man then wandered off into the crowds on the ship, and Renée Harris never saw him again...*so had he been true to his word and left the ship at Cherbourg?* We'll never know, but Renée Harris didn't...she continued her voyage on the ill-fated ship and on the night of the sinking she managed to get a place in a lifeboat and survived.

One of the strangest stories was that of Chief Officer Henry Wilde. In a cruel twist of fate Wilde wasn't even supposed to be on the Titanic when she set sail. Originally, he was Chief Officer aboard Titanic's sister ship – Olympic in 1911 – yet it was another sea disaster which would see Wilde posted aboard the doomed liner. It was as if fate was constantly working against Henry Wilde, because on the 20th of September 1911, the RMS Olympic was involved in a huge collision with the British warship HMS Hawke. In an almost exact eerie replay of events that would take place seven months later between the Titanic and the New York – the swell created by the power of the Olympic's engines drew the HMS Hawke towards it. The collision flattened the bow of the HMS Hawke and ripped a huge hole in the steel plating on the rear right side of the Olympic. At the time,

the Olympic was being captained by none other than Edward John Smith...who would go on to become Captain of the Titanic.

But Wilde and Edwards weren't the only ones doomed for the decks of the Titanic. With the Olympic now out of action and back in a dry dock for repairs, The White Star Line – the company who operated both of these ships – assigned not only Olympic's Chief Officer Henry Wilde to the newer Titanic, but also First Officer William Murdoch, Chief Engineer Joseph Bell, Chief Surgeon William O'Loughlin and Chief Purser Herbert McElroy. As soon as Henry Wilde set foot on the Titanic, he had an ominous feeling that something wasn't right.

Meanwhile, on the 3rd of April 1912, the repaired Olympic left Southampton with its new Captain, Herbert James Haddock who was fully expecting his Chief Officers to be with him...but he was assigned new staff, and even though this was his first time in command of a vessel of that size, he would have many successful journeys and a long career. This couldn't be said for the staff who were transferred to the Titanic.

Chief Officer Wilde even wrote a letter to his sister stating, *'I still don't like this ship...I have a queer feeling about it'*, and in some bizarre coincidence, it could be argued that Wilde's addition to Titanic's crew set off a chain reaction of events that could have played a huge part in the whole disaster. Second Officer David Blair was removed from the Titanic's crew when Wilde was added, and whether it was knowingly or unknowingly, he took a key which unlocked a specific officer's cupboard away with him. Inside this cupboard were the binoculars that lookouts aboard the Titanic would have used to spot icebergs...but no one knew where they were stored, and no one had a key to get to them if they did know...leaving the lookouts without the tools that could have saved the ship and all the lives which were lost. It's a horrible thought to have in the back of your mind that, because you had taken an innocent key away with you, you may have inadvertently played a part in one the biggest maritime disaster ever to take place.

So, had fate already decided Chief Officer Wilde's demise, by literally guiding him to the vessel that he would lose his life on through this series of bizarre coincidences...or was Wilde already aware through his precognitive feelings evident in the letter that was sent to his sister? Every officer stated earlier that was transferred to the Titanic along with Henry Wilde died on that fateful night on the 15th of April 1912.

And in an even stranger twist of fate, the very key that Second Officer David Blair took with him when he was transferred to the Olympic, remained in his family for the next 95 years, until 2007 when it sold at auction for over \$150,000.

Last minute cancellations were also noted as fact, and one involved George and Edith Vanderbilt. They were first class passengers that were awaiting to board the ship when suddenly they both inexplicably backed out of their journey. They were so close to getting on board the Titanic that their luggage had already been loaded on and sent to their room...but they flatly refused to go. Instead, they sent one of their servants Edwin Wheeler to complete the journey and stay with their luggage.... but he perished when the ship sank.

Premonitions of the Titanic's fate weren't just limited to feelings or bizarre encounters.... two authors wrote eerily similar accounts years before the ship even set sail. Morgan Robertson was born the son of ship captain in 1861 in America and had a love of the sea throughout his life. He was partially involved in the invention of the periscope – although the level of his involvement has been debated for years. What really makes Morgan Robertson stand out was the short story he wrote in 1898 called *The Wreck of the Titan*. The similarities between Robertson's book and not only the

sinking of the Titanic but also, its appearance, are extremely creepy. In the book the ship is the largest man-made craft in the world, with new levels of not only luxury, but also safety. The Titan is declared unsinkable and indestructible and therefore carries only enough lifeboats to save roughly half of the passengers on board.... *sound familiar yet?*

The story describes the Titan colliding with an iceberg while crossing the Atlantic and sinking with a huge loss of life...same as Titanic. The month of the sinking in the book is April...same as Titanic...some of the passengers are also saved and rescued by a passing ship...same as Titanic. The book tells the story of this disaster and how an officer named John Rowland survived it, then found God, then won the heart of his one true love back. There are also parallels to the movie that James Cameron would make in 1997...a love story set on a ship which is destined for disaster...but in the movie Jack and Rose never get to live out their dreams together. The sinking of the Titanic generated huge headlines all over the world, and Robertson's book enjoyed a revival – but this was only short lived. It faded into obscurity over time and Morgan Robertson passed away in 1915...just three years after the disaster which he'd seemingly predicted with stunning accuracy.

But he wasn't the only author who predicted the fate of the most famous ship in the world. In 1886 William Thomas Stead wrote and published an article in a newspaper that was entitled '*How the Mail Steamer Went Down in Mid Atlantic by a Survivor*'. This article detailed the experience of a sailor named Thompson who, while aboard the steam ship he was a serving officer of, noticed to his horror that the number of lifeboats could only carry approximately 400 of the 916 people who were on board. The next day, the ship collided with a large three masted sailing ship and sank, with over half of its passengers perishing due to the shortage of lifeboats. Thompson survives and in the closing lines of the article gives the chilling advice: '*This is exactly what might take place and will take place if liners are sent to sea short of boats.*' But this wasn't his only story which was published which told of a disaster at sea.

Again in 1892, Stead published another article entitled '*From the Old World to the New*', which told of a steam ship called the Majestic rescuing another ship which had struck an iceberg and was sinking fast. During his journey, the captain of the Majestic had taken a cautious tact with his route, as he knew the dangers of icebergs in the Atlantic. *And the company who operated these ships in this story?...*it was the White Star Line...who also built the Titanic.

William Thomas Stead was a highly respected journalist, and his opinions were held in high regard throughout much of the world. He was instrumental in helping raise the legal age of sexual consent from 13 to 16 years of age in Great Britain, after an article which he wrote exposed how easy it was to obtain vulnerable young girls for sex in London. A huge campaigner for world peace, he was due to take part in a conference in New York at the request of none-other- than the President of the United States William Howard Taft...until disaster struck...

In an enormously cruel twist of fate, William Thomas Stead boarded Titanic as a first-class passenger for its maiden voyage to New York....and never made it. Witnesses reported that he acted with huge courage and humility as the night of the sinking unfolded, helping people into lifeboats – even giving his life jacket away to a passenger who didn't have one. The last sighting of him was from a witness named Philip Mock who said that he saw Stead along with the richest man on the ship, John Jacob Astor the 4th, holding on to a makeshift raft. The cold eventually must have overcome them, as the

witness said that he saw them both release their grip on the raft and slip away beneath the surface of the water. Stead's body was never recovered.

These accounts of people apparently predicting this terrible disaster are truly fascinating...*but do they all have reasonable explanations?* Many sailors back when the Titanic was launched were very superstitious anyway, *so was this just an extension of their beliefs coming across as precognitive phenomena?*

The same could be said for the authors who seemingly described the disaster in detail years before it happened. *Was it just a matter of time before an event such as the Titanic's sinking was going to happen anyway?* Laws and policies governing the number of lifeboats were matters that were raised several times, so were the authors simply *stating the obvious?* Even with these arguments, it's certainly strange and eerie how these people could have got so many details correct...but as human beings, *are we again looking for patterns that aren't there?*

Let's move onto the fascinating story that ultimately led to a medium being the last person ever to be tried, convicted and imprisoned under The Witchcraft Act of 1735. Whilst this isn't exactly a premonition, it does involve the medium seemingly pulling information about a serious event from the other side...Helen Duncan was born in 1897 in Perthshire, and even at an early age at school, she would alarm her fellow pupils and teachers with her bizarre behaviour and predictions.

She married Henry Duncan in 1916, and by this time she'd gained the reputation of being somebody who had special supernatural talents. 10 years later, Helen decided to move from clairvoyancy to full on mediumship, offering the public the chance to attend seances where they could have the chance to speak to loved ones who had passed away. With the help of her spirit guides, Helen would go on to become one of the most popular psychic mediums of her day...but not without much controversy...

Her production of ectoplasm during her seances drew audiences from all over, but this was exposed as cheesecloth which Helen would swallow and regurgitate when the effect was needed. The spirits which would also appear were found to be papier mâché masks with sheets draped around them to give them the effect of being real spiritual beings visiting from the other world.

Even the great paranormal investigator Harry Price paid to sit in on a number of seances hosted by Helen Duncan and found that she was performing nothing more than cold readings and parlour tricks. In one particular incident, Harry Price demanded that she be X-rayed to expose the fact that she had swallowed cheesecloth, but she vehemently refused, instead choosing to run out of the room and into the street...

Price recalls that she began to scream and shout outside on the street whilst clinging onto a set of railings for dear life until her husband arrived. A large crowd gathered and even the police turned up to see what was going on, and after being told what was happening, they allowed her to be led back into the room where she then agreed to be X-rayed. Harry Price immediately asked for Helen's husband Henry, to empty his pockets...but he refused, leading Price and the others at the controlled seance to believe that Helen had handed the cheesecloth to her husband before it was discovered.

The group agreed to continue with another seance, but only on the condition that if more ectoplasm were to appear, they could take samples. Helen Duncan also agreed....and then continued, and as the seance went on, more ectoplasm began to appear; and at that point one of the group rushed forward and cut a piece off with a pair of scissors...but this time it wasn't cheesecloth...instead it

was, what was later found to be, paper soaked in egg whites and fashioned into a flattened type of tube.

In Harry Price's opinion, she was quite simply a fake, and a 1933 conviction for fraudulent practices of mediumship didn't help her case either; but it was two events in 1941 that proved to be eerily accurate...and caused her even more problems. Now in 1941 the world was in the tight grip of the second world war and as you'd imagine reports of deaths from all three of Britain's military forces: the Army, Navy and RAF were in newspapers all over the country and the world...but there were things that the war office and the government tried to keep quiet until the time was right to make official announcements.

As Brigadier Roy Firebrace sat in the audience watching Helen Duncan go through the motions, he was somewhat taken aback when she told of a British battleship that had been sunk. Firebrace had no idea of such an incident taking place, so after the seance he took his enquiries to the British Navy...and they confirmed that the HMS Hood had indeed been sunk by German shells in the Battle of the Denmark Strait. The ship sank in just three minutes with only three survivors from a crew of 1,418 souls.

How did Helen Duncan know that a Royal Navy battleship had been sunk? Now you could say that being in the middle of a war, you're bound to get a hit as far as predicting the sinking of a ship is concerned, but this happened the same day as the seance itself...but it was the next incident which put her on a direct path to the military office itself. In November of 1941 Helen Duncan held another seance in Portsmouth...remember that location ..In front of a perplexed and intrigued audience, Helen said that the spirit of a young man had come through...the young man was a naval officer, and he had a message to give to his mother...who was in the audience at the time. Helen relayed to the spectators at the seance that the officer had said that he had died when the ship that he was on, the HMS Barham, had been sunk...the woman in the audience confirmed that her son was indeed on board the HMS Barham...but nobody knew about the sinking...at least not yet.

It was a true fact: the HMS Barham had been sunk off the Egyptian coast by a German torpedo, and this had happened a few days before Helen Duncan's seance...but the War Office had temporarily covered up the incident because of fear that it would impact the morale of the war effort...so again...*how did Helen Duncan know that another battleship had been sunk?...and also, how did she know the name of the vessel? Did the spirit of a naval officer really come through to her providing this information to pass on to his mother – who was curiously in the audience at the time?* If you recall, I asked you to remember the location of both seances...Portsmouth – because this location is especially important to the whole story. Portsmouth had huge significance to the British Royal Navy and still does today; so, it's very plausible that the news of both sinkings could have been leaked by someone at the naval base. As we already know throughout history, humans are extremely bad at keeping secrets, so it's more than possible that this information could have made its way back to Helen Duncan....I'm not saying that's what happened...I'm just saying that it's a possibility...let's face it, she'd been exposed as a fraud a number of times in the past...*why change now? Did she suddenly decide to use her alleged psychic abilities?*

Either way, the War Office became very interested in her every move. They believed if she could really somehow gain access to highly classified information, then there was a risk that this information could be leaked to enemy forces, and with the D Day landings being planned, they simply couldn't take the risk. Two years later on the 19th of January 1944, an undercover police officer and a Royal Navy Lieutenant infiltrated one of Helen Duncan's seances and duly arrested her after a scene of confusion and the exposure of more trickery.

The problem was that apart from charging Duncan with the crime of Fraudulent Mediumship, there wasn't much more that they could do...but they felt that they needed to silence her, so they instead sent her to Holloway Women's Prison on the charge of Conspiracy...which potentially carried the death sentence. Knowing that the Conspiracy charge wouldn't stick, the War Office brought back **The Witchcraft Act of 1735** and successfully tried her at the Old Bailey. She was sentenced to nine months in prison. The sentence was seen as a travesty, and even Winston Churchill waded into the argument and vowed to make amends for the poor show of justice. Helen Duncan died in 1956, and even today her alleged abilities are marred by the exposure of the trickery she employed to fool not only the paying public, but those who were extremely vulnerable due to the loss of loved ones.

But even after all of this, we're still left with the question of *how did she know that these wartime disasters had taken place? Was it real psychic ability, or just simply already knowing what had happened?* As you've heard so far, many of these cases are truly fascinating, and when a listener sent through a series of events which happened to him, I knew that I had to include them in this episode.

Craig Reeder has been an avid listener of the show for a while now and sent in an email which left me stunned. The following strange events have taken place over a period of over two decades, and they are certainly worth considering when you're looking for potential proof of precognitive abilities. These are Craig's stories....

After listening to all the episodes and especially the listeners' stories, I felt it right to write in with my own experiences with premonitions. Over the past 23 years, I have had several premonitions all of which have come to reality, but four of these I would hand on heart use the word ... unfortunately.

My earliest premonition, which was my first, was from what my mother told me. This came when I was only 10 years old. It was 1992, and I was staying, as I would usually do on a Friday night, at my Nan and Grandad's house in a beautiful village in County Durham, called Sedgfield. A place where we all know a previous Prime Minister, named Tony Blair, was an MP for.

It was like any other evening; I was being told to get my pyjamas on and brush my teeth and get ready and settled for bed. After doing so, I got the colouring book and pens out and thought I would colour in before I went to bed. As I was sat there at the dining table, I had a feeling that went straight through my body like a freight train that *'my nan would not live past 80'*. At only 10 years old I didn't know what that meant. I asked my nan, *'How old are you?'* to which she replied, *'I'm 66 son, why?'* I replied with a light-hearted answer to shrug it off – as if I was just being inquisitive – but that stayed with me right until my adult life because my nan was everything to me; I would even go to her house from school at lunch times to spend time with her.

I didn't speak of this until I was around 18 in the year 2000, at which point I said to my mother that I was worried for when Nan turned 80. I got a response which any parent would give and was told to stop worrying as Nan was fine. 2006 came and my nan celebrated turning 80 at her favourite pub in Sedgfield – The Dunn Cow – and enjoyed all her family being there and eating her favourite roast potatoes that The Dunn Cow is famous for. In late August 2006, my nan started to feel unwell and went to the doctor. After some tests, she was diagnosed with lung cancer and started treatment. On 6th September 2006, my nan passed away at the age of 80 and I was devastated...*but did I already see this coming?*

The second of these four premonitions came when I was 14 in 1996, we were living in a small village in County Durham called Trimdon Village – the village where the previous Prime Minister Tony Blair grew up. It was like any other day, midst of summer, and I remember it being a warm summer's day because the old couple who lived next door, Alice and Bob (not their real names to protect their family and identity), would have their grandchildren come and stay in the school summer holidays – and we would all play together. This time was always the highlight of our school holidays.

I was out playing football in the street, and I just stopped and heard these words: *'Bob hasn't got long left.'* At 14 years old, I didn't think any of it and carried on playing football with my brother and friends. It wasn't until we were shouted in by my mum for tea at around 5pm, that I said to her *'Mum, Bob hasn't got long left you know and will probably die today'* – my mother looked shocked, the blood drained from her face and asked me *'what I was playing at? As that was not funny...'* Again, at 14 I was not aware that Bob was in hospital and gravely ill; but just as the premonition said Bob passed away that night – and my mum was in shock when Alice told her what had happened the very next day.

The third premonition I had was again concerning my next-door neighbour Alice, who was now on her own since the passing of Bob. I stepped up a bit after Bob died, as Alice couldn't do a lot on her own, such as going to the shops for her and cutting her grass. We became good friends and I saw her as another grandmother. It was in 1999, when I was 17, that Alice's health started to decline. I noticed this more as the jobs I was doing for her in my spare time increased, and I told my mum of my concerns.

Over a few months Alice was in and out of hospital yet she would always bounce back – and she would joke with me that she will live to be over 100 – and I would also hope so ... but I always had this *'feeling'* that she wouldn't, and that upset me a great deal.

It was around the end of October, and I remember this – as it was Halloween. And again, I had the experience of that *'feeling'* – this time I sensed that *'Alice won't see the Millennium!'* As I was 17 at this point and a bit more wary of things – I knew this was a message or a warning, so I went into my house and told my mum. Her reaction was again full of shock, but this time she responded by sitting down and telling me to stop being daft, just as parents do when they know it's quite serious but don't want to alarm you. Sure enough, Alice died in the December of 1999 and didn't see the impending once-in-our-lifetime Millennium celebrations.

I do come from a spiritual family, as my mum always believed in the spirit world and that our loved ones are always around to protect us and to reach out to us – which I know has been discussed in previous episodes which made me wonder: *was it Bob reaching out to me before he passed on to tell me in order to pass on his message? And was it Bob again reaching out to me to tell me that it was Alice's time and that he will look after her in the spirit world?* – I personally take some warmth from this being the case – and that they are now back together reunited. It was at this point my mum asked me to not tell her of anymore premonitions because she couldn't handle it anymore.

My fourth premonition came when I was at work in 2014, and this one changed my life. I have always worked in IT for most of my adult life, from successfully completing my IT apprenticeship in 2004 to now being quite high up in Managed IT Services for a reputable IT company. In early 2014 I fancied a break from IT, and it was at this point my brother told me of an entry level position for a trainee asbestos surveyor – and I thought that it sounded interesting. He said that the only slight drawback was that I would have to report to him and learn from him. Although my brother was four

years younger than me, he was a highly successful fully qualified asbestos surveyor and licenced asbestos remover. Although I had always had the upper hand as the big brother growing up, I was very keen to watch him work and learn his trade. The more I worked with him, the more I became very proud of the man he was. Seeing how professional he was with his trade gave me even more confidence that he was the perfect teacher. We were assigned to a college in Leeds that was due to be converted from a college to apartments – and our job was to survey the parts of the college that were to be demolished for any asbestos that needed to be removed before demolition.

As brothers, we were known for our daft messing about – and as the job was a 'demo' job we were allowed to, within reason and with the correct asbestos standard PPE, look for asbestos without the worry of damage because the building was being demolished anyway. We would swing from wires and generally lark about. However, as we were larking about – and this was around July 2014 as it was red hot in our white FBI like asbestos protection suits – I had another one of those sobering premonitions...but this time it floored me ...it was about my beloved mum, our mum. I had this 'feeling' *'that Mum wouldn't live a very long life'* – and that hit me like a bullet, as if I had been shot...because I knew that this was going to be a reality.

I said to my brother, *'Do you think Mum will live to be 100?'* and he said, *'Oh Craig do shut up, you're so morbid.'* Now my brother Jonathan knew nothing about these premonitions as he didn't really believe in this kind of phenomena; or maybe he didn't know how to process the possibilities of things like that ever happening. I never spoke about it further to *anyone*, and I certainly didn't speak of it to my mum. How could I tell her that! – Plus, she had previously told me not to tell her if I had anymore premonitions.

I successfully managed to bury it in the back of my mind, forgetting about it. That was until late October 2014 – me and my brother were in an old art classroom where he was taking samples for investigation, and I had stopped for a break. I picked up my mobile phone out from my pocket and I, as I always would, gave my mum a quick call to see how her day was. On this occasion she didn't answer which didn't alarm me at first, I just assumed she was making a cup of tea or even popped out for a bit – and, anyway, she would always call me back.

An hour went by...then another one and another. So, I called my sister and there was no answer from her either, or no call back. So, I called both again and still no answer. At that point, my heart sunk and the room I was standing in became very large indeed. Both me and my brother were very worried. Finally, we got a call from my sister who told me that Mum was in hospital as she had lost the use of one of her legs and was getting some rest.

I felt sick.

It was Saturday 25th October 2014, and she was booked into have an MRI scan. We were then all put into a room on the evening of the same day; we were told it was lung cancer and it had spread to her spine and bones. Losing the function of her leg then made sense – as it was due to the tumour on her spine blocking the signals from her brain.

My Mum started radiotherapy straight away and had a biopsy the following Friday... the 31st October 2014 – and we were told that we would receive the results of the type of cancer within a week or so.

On Monday 3rd November, my mum deteriorated quickly – drifting in and out of consciousness but still talking to us when she could. Strangely, she was also having a right old conversation with

someone else, saying things like 'Yes, I know, I won't be long!' and 'Look just wait!' and she also said the words, 'Mum just wait I won't be long!'

As you can imagine, we were all dumbfounded and wondered if this was solid evidence that my mum was in between this world and the next?...*Were we seeing this right in front of our own eyes?*

My mum passed away peacefully with us all by her side on Tuesday 4th November without ever getting the results of her biopsy. She did open her eyes once before she passed, when my brother was trying to fix the blind on the window and it fell off – so even just before she passed, she was still telling us off.

As I thought back to my previous premonition, *was it my nan giving me a message when I was in the old art classroom telling me that Mum's life was coming to a natural end? Was Nan telling me that she would be coming for her and that she would be looked after in the spirit world?* – It is hard to not believe this, especially with the conversations which my mum was having the day before she passed – saying the words, 'Mum just wait I won't be long!'... I take comfort that we are greeted by our loved ones when it is our time to leave this earth and move on. Because I miss my mum and my nan so much, the thought of them coming to greet me when my time comes gives me a great deal of comfort.

Massive thanks to Craig for not only taking the time to send in these astonishing but also heart-breaking stories – but also for feeling that the **Haunted UK Podcast** was deserving of the opportunity to be able to share these tales, of what could be a type of precognitive ability, with the listeners who tune in. So as with all the episodes in this entire podcast so far...we're back to the question of what you believe. *Can people really predict the future?...are there some people out there who have the ability, be it a gift or a curse, to see future disasters hours, days, weeks and sometimes months before they happen? Have these events already happened in an alternative timeline...and can these individuals somehow tap into that timeline to get a brief glimpse of what is to come? What do you think? Have you ever experienced something similar? Or perhaps you have had a dream which revealed future events? Or do you think there is something else going on here? Something more rational? Explainable? Let us know via our Instagram page or @hauntedukpod on Twitter.*

It must be a completely horrifying feeling to have a vision, or an emotion that sparks the realisation of a forthcoming disaster...but not have anyone around you who will take it seriously.... only for then to see it unfold, leaving you, and only you knowing...that you knew it was going to happen all along. Maybe the lesson here is to try and remember your dreams, your visions, those strange feelings that make you feel uncomfortable...and start simply writing them down and making a note of them...because the next person who could have a glimpse of the future...could be **you**.